1:Sanders Z-54 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Thessaly

acres a day with a tractor. "Before the war," he went on to say, "a peasant who tried something new was considered an amusing person with a loose screw in his head. Even the agriculturists were received with 'what have those educated people got to tell us who have callouses from working?' Also, the agriculturist has learned more about agriculture and more about people, changing for the better."

The director's wife agreed with what we had learned from Alekos about the effect of mechanization upon woman's work. She did point out that machine harvesting and threshing had relieved the housewife of an old burden of feeding many people for long periods of time when the work was done by hand. However, the women still plant tobacco and cultivate cotton. Men are helping out a little more, but this hard field work in Thessaly is still a woman's job. Here again there is some compensation for the women. Although they have as much work now as before, they have more money. They will change into better dresses in the evening and go for a walk on a weekday, something much less common before the last war. Finally, the director's wife pointed out, those families who own twenty to twenty-five acres of land have acquired ease and prosperity and are becoming a well-to-do peasantry.

Elsewhere around Larissa we inquired about the spread of mechanization. The tractor dealers in the town put Alekos' problems in a somewhat different light. We learned, for example, that a 46-horsepower tractor, with starter and pneumatic tire wheels, cost 55,000 drachmas ($3,667); the purchaser had to pay 40 percent in cash and could sign a bill for the remaining 60 percent, payable after 18 months to the Bank of Greece at the rate of 16 percent interest. Dealers and some of the local government officials considered this rate most oppressive.

A second problem was that of spare parts, most of which had to be imported. Foreign-exchange difficulties and import restrictions make this difficult; when the parts were not available, the owner of the tractor was greatly inconvenienced, to put it mildly. We got some idea of the problem of spare parts when we learned that there were 25 dealers of tractors of different makes in Larissa alone. The dealers attempted to teach the purchasers how to use the machine and, a year or so before, the government had set up traveling schools which instructed in the operation and care of the tractor and afterwards gave examinations for licenses. That year, out of 1,200 farm workers examined, only 700 were given a license.

Dealers also indicated that the buyer of a tractor usually ordered a plow and a disk-harrow, with many requesting grain drills. This equipment adds greatly to the total cost. Most of the tractors were bought by individuals or by a group of three to five peasants, with only twenty to twenty-five tractors belonging to cooperatives.

In the tractor land of Larissa everything seems fine now. As in the case

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governmental structure which tied together these separated local governments into any larger whole. Thus, as Greece moved toward modern nationhood, the type of local government which had existed under the Ottoman Empire began to wither.

One Athenian professor said to me that after ten years of revolution (1821–1830) the people wanted a king who could end anarchy and bring order. They had to accept a centralized government and put up with laws not natural to the country but which were necessary if Greece were to appear "civilized" enough to get loans from abroad. "We still need a legal system agreeing better with our country," he concluded. This is one reason, he thinks, why the peasant tries to get around the laws; he does not look upon them as his laws, as Greek laws.

During the first forty years of this century, the greatest changes in community life occurred under Venizelos in 1912 and under Metaxas in 1935. Venizelos, for instance, refashioned the old demes, or local units consisting of several villages, and made each village a unit responsible for supporting many local services under a community council and president. The deme still had the taxing, police, and judicial powers. The central government attempted to supply teachers for communities, a step which meant much less local autonomy but which was essential if Greece were to have a uniform system of education. Many other activities which local governmental bodies had handled up to this time had to be approved by the nomarch (administrator of the nomos) and ministry. Even the Constitution of 1927, though leaving to local government matters managed directly by the citizens, left the definition of "local matters" so vague that the demes and communes were at the mercy of the legislators and ministries who, by law and decree, could "outline their powers, procedures, and revenues." [4]

Metaxas, after abrogating the Constitution of 1927, imposed on the total Greek population "modern" methods of hygiene, childrearing, and education. He even attempted to introduce early weaning and the use of bottles. In community affairs, local elections were abolished and local officials could be dismissed and replaced by the Minister of the Interior.

Today, according to one authority:

> The local government units in Greece are demes and communes. There are 217 demes and 5,746 communes. Demes, under the 1912 law, were those units with 10,000 or more population; but recent amendments allowed so many exceptions that there are now 144 below this minimum standard. Communes are supposed to have 300 or more people and an elementary school; but this standard was also relaxed so that now there are many below this figure. As a matter of fact, half of the communes today have less than five hundred inhabitants.[5]

Since such small population centers cannot support all of the expected services, some kind of amalgamation of units is thought desirable. But how

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The children in our village are tyrannized. Just as they sit down to study their mother says, "Get up. Break your bones, take your papers and the goat, and take her out to pasture." "Get up, get some water, get some wood, go and bring in the oxen. Don't you hear? In the evening you can study." The children go do their different tasks and in the evening come back broken with fatigue and drop off to sleep. In the morning they are cuffed by the teacher because they haven't written their lesson, and thus it goes. Black letters they learn! As if they had a lamp! Most of them read sitting on the floor; they drop on their stomachs near the fireplace and read in the light of the burning wood. From exhaustion they fall asleep and there is danger that they might get burned if the elders do not pull them away. In spring when the days are longer they read outside; they take the hog and the goat and go here or there and read while the animals pasture. What sort of reading can they do? As soon as they start, the hog escapes here and the goat there; they try to catch the hog, the goat escapes again. They start crying and lost is the reading. They also get beaten if the animals cause damage to the crops. Most of the children work also in the field; they also do some heavier tasks. What sort of letters can they learn? It's lucky they learn as much as they do.

When I discussed parental attitudes toward education with an experienced school man in Northern Greece, he said: "Less land and more knowledge is needed. A farmer can't see the need of educating a son who is to farm. He will keep the one to succeed him at home and send the others off for an education." The people of Vilia, a village in Central Greece, brag that the parents there see to it that the children go through eight grades but indicate that the other villages do not do this. "We do this," they say, "because an educated man commands more respect." But what about the children in the other villages?

From time to time an Athens newspaper comes out with some shocking statistics which cause a sensation and are then forgotten. Such accounts point out that the Article 16 of the Constitution states: "Elementary education is obligatory for all and is supplied gratis by the state." In 1951–52 it was estimated that two hundred thousand Greek children of school age were not in attendance. Conditions have improved considerably since then, but the effects of this nonattendance will be felt for many years to come. At that time it was also stated that at about the third grade the numbers of those who started are halved, a truly high drop-out rate, although other reports place this reduction at the end of the fourth grade.[5] One article comments:

> Although the Constitution states that elementary schooling is supplied gratis, the various stamps and taxes, not to mention the prohibitive prices of schoolbooks, writing materials, and other paraphernalia, make this statement null and void.[6]

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solidated elementary schools, even if the educational administrators should consider them desirable.

Most villagers show a pride in their school and try to locate it on one of the best sites in the village, quite often near the main square. These buildings come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. In the middle of the Peloponnesos we found a village school over a hundred years old, which had been privately endowed. The building was a one-room, poorly lighted structure which must have been truly grand by standards of a century ago. But today it seemed sadly inadequate for the many children crowded into its rows of benches. In Metsovo, the picturesque Wallachian village between Ioannina (Epirus) and Trikkala, we found an attractive, two-story stone structure of a type characterizing the more prosperous established mountain settlement which furnished pack horses for the caravan routes before the coming of the railroad. In Malakassa, in Attica, we saw a school being built of concrete blocks in 1955 by a joint effort of the American Save the Children Federation and the local village authorities.

An American senator once became interested in the welfare of a village near Mount Olympus, since some of his constituents of Greek descent told him that little was being done to remedy the deplorable conditions there. An American Mission official went to investigate. Part of his report gives a vivid postwar word picture:

> The school was not completely ruined. The roof had collapsed, and the flooring, window-panes and furniture, all made of wood, had been used for firewood. The building remained and is being repaired. Unfortunately, the funds for school repairs are limited throughout Greece. The whole Nomos (Prefecture of Larissa, for instance, in which Kokkinopoulos is located), is comprised of 160 communities, most of the schools of which were damaged to some degree. The Nomos received $21,000 for this purpose, $2,371, of which went into the repair of the school at Kokkinopoulos. The roof has been replaced and the stairs finished, as have two of the four classrooms. In some villages, the State assistance was supplemented by the private initiative of the villagers, either in terms of materials or labor, and the schools were finished. In any case, the two classrooms are considered relatively adequate for the 158 children of school age in the village.[8]

The educational figures for 1956–57 throw some added light on the problem, since they show that there were in the whole country, including the cities, towns, and villages, a total of 8,527 elementary schools with about 940,000 pupils, or an average of 112 per school.[9] The chances are that in most village schools there are from 50 to 60 children per room, if the room happens to be large enough to accommodate that many, since approximately 60 percent of all elementary schools have one room and a single teacher.[7]

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Therefore, the school board in many villages has its hands full trying to provide an adequate school building by seeking aid from the King's Institute, from the local community council, or from whatever other source can be tapped. The village is much more apt to procure and hold a teacher, since teachers are in such short supply, if it can provide him something approximating satisfactory living conditions. That is why some school boards, in constructing a new school, include a room in which the teacher can live, for such private accommodations are not available in many Greek villages. Providing necessary equipment and school supplies is another persistent problem for the school board, particularly since many of the parents cannot afford to buy for their children what the teacher thinks essential. Nor should it be supposed that the national government is indifferent to this state of affairs. Its funds for education are necessarily limited and these are first earmarked for teachers' salaries. What kind of person, one might ask, would care to teach under some of the difficulties encountered in the village schools?

The Village Teacher

For the almost 940,000 pupils in elementary school in 1956–57, there were 19,872 teachers. This means a national average of about 47 pupils per teacher, although as an average it indicates that a large number of teachers have more than this. In many of the smaller villages, the teachers have from four to six grades in one room, reminiscent of the rural one-room school in America of many years ago.

If we turn to accounts of village life, we gain a quick insight into, but certainly not a representative sampling of, the number of teachers one would meet, since each of these villages has at least three teachers:

In a fairly large Macedonian village we find five teachers, three with the rank of "instructors" who have finished a two-year normal school beyond secondary school. The two others are trained kindergarten or nursery-school teachers. They have 402 pupils, of whom 358 are in the regular six grades and 44 are in kindergarten and nursery. Most of these teachers have been in this village for at least five years. Nevertheless, because of their urban background, their thinking is urban and they find it difficult to take part in village activities.

In a village near Xanthe there are three teachers, all new to the community, who are paid by the central government. Two of these are from the Peloponnesos far to the south. All are graduates of the pedagogical academies. They have 156 pupils with an average daily attendance of 142.

Another village in Central Greece has three teachers: one man and two women. The man has resided in the village since 1947; one woman was appointed head of the school in 1942 but was away during the German occupation; the third was appointed in 1951. All are graduates of the normal school.

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fertilizing methods or rotation methods or introduction of new legume plants or a new variety of wheat. As a rule, their effect on the farmers is great with definite results.

Thus the future farmers of Megali Vrisi, working cooperatively, felt the need of adopting new methods and passing on to others the results of their /74/ investigations. It is surprising to know how effectively the cooperative project has tied up these fellows in undertaking to do other jobs useful for their village.

The individual project idea was a failure. People who live in the same village, still under the patriarchial type of family life and whose problems are so closely interwoven, cannot help but cooperate and support whole-heartedly cooperative work. [621] This very same idea led those boys to build a community hall 476 621 and a stage for theatrical shows. The whole structure was built by personal work and what money was saved from theatrical shows [345] at Christmas. The group learned Christmas carols and sang them [533] to every house in the village. The contributions from this event [735] were used for the poor of the village. The small reforestation project which was started by this group has led to the development [314] of the "Day of the Green", at which day everyone in the village [185] planted a tree on the hill.

The yearly athletic day event that provides an enjoyable [526] gathering for the village was planned by the young men.

/75/ One can easily foresee the future of such a community [874] which will be handled by people who learned to cooperate so well in their youth. This vocational education meant more to the lives of these young men than what they got from the grammar school.

Invasion of adult education. The Greek government, feeling 873 great responsibility toward these people, who during the wars of [658] 1912-1913, 1914-1918, and 1920-1922, lost the chance of attending schools, provided special evening lessons in each village. The lessons were handled by the teacher in the local school and thus many of these men and women had a chance to learn how